

How we Checkmated the Filibusters-Chief Flynn

Romance of Arms Smuggling by No Means Dead, as the Case of Jose St. Pierre Giordani and His Activities In Haiti and Santo Domingo Plainly Proved—Broad Scope of Law That Finally Thwarted His Machinations

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CASE VIII.

EVERY so often we are told by some one more or less an authority on such abstract wisdom that the world is growing better or that the world is growing worse. It is a general statement always, not specifying in what department we are better or worse, and usually it opens up a fruitless discussion while the world rolls on in obedience to the rules of evolution.

Those who tell us we are decaying are dismayed when obstinate humanity takes an immediate turn for the better and eschews wars and lesser evils for a most encouraging period. And the aggressive optimist is dumfounded an hour later by observing the rise of class riots, sanguinary rebellions and revolutions, and large red crime waves.

The sum total of our learning, therefore, from such discussions is that we would save much valuable time if we devoted our own energies to doing the best we can at whatever we may have to do and permit the world to proceed in its charted course without any attempt at direction or correction from our individual selves.

Despite all this, I'd like to contribute to the aforesaid fruitless discussion, my own viewpoint. Whether we are morally sounder than we were fifty years ago depends upon your definition of morals. Certainly we are less spectacular than we were. We seem to have calmed down in favor of efficiency. Standardization has enveloped us. There may be just as much crime to-day as there ever was—maybe more—but it is of a less fanciful, less romantic nature.

Where's the Bold Smuggler

And Foolhardy Filibuster

For instance, what has become of the old fashioned smuggler? Was he not possessed of greater appeal to the imagination than the customs dodger of to-day? And the booze smuggler is a roughneck rowdy generally—nothing more. He's not a smuggler at heart; he doesn't love his art. All he's looking for is quick financial returns when he will resume his wonted air of respectability.

And what has become of the professional revolutionist and his cousin, the filibuster?

Shades of Dynamite Johnny O'Brien! There, my dear readers, was a man for you. Lawbreakers they were, to be sure, but almost forgivable ones. They loaded their secret craft with dynamite and gun-cotton, pistols and cannon, and, taking their lives between thumb and forefinger, set forth to dodge warships and armed patrols, and place within the hands of whispering revolutionists the power to blast unwanted presidents and kings from their palaces.

Your average Central and South American revolutionist was one of two things: either he was a mad Chauvinist, boiling over with patriotic fervor and ready to face the firing squad (which they so often had to do) with a smile, or he was just an ambitious politician who nurtured a desire to be boss. He was courageous, resourceful, tricky and wholly unscrupulous.

His cousin, the filibuster, however, was 99 per cent. adventurer and 1 per cent. business man. I have known him to undertake a job of running blockades with contraband in a ship ready to founder; when the chances were a thousand to one against his coming out alive and when he knew that the revolutionists to whom he was to deliver the war material would have no compunctions whatever in cutting his throat in order to avoid footing the bill.

More often than not he received no money in advance. He was for the most part a daring soldier of fortune, who was about the only real "citizen of the world" I have ever met.

Jose St. Pierre Giordani, a Man Who Really Loved an Intrigue

suspect that Giordani was more or less active in fomenting political strife on that temperamental island simply because he loved the ensuing intrigue.

I should not classify Giordani as a criminal by any means. We did have to send him to jail for six months, but that was for causing money to be made for the revolutionists in Santo Domingo, and had the revolution been successful the money he had manufactured would have been the official legal tender of his Government.

It so happens that the United States Secret Service had reason to send a couple of us to Haiti and Santo Domingo a year or so before I came across Giordani. Without taking chances with the tricks memory might play by trying to review the brawls that was on when I arrived in Santo Domingo for the first time, I confine myself to the statement that it was a part of the internecine strife incident to the Jimenez-Morales revolt against Wos y Gil, then President of the little republic.

Although I did not meet him, I heard often the name of Jose St. Pierre Giordani and came to understand that he stood behind the forces of Jimenez and Morales, somewhere like a nervous producer at the opening night of an expensive musical comedy.

Giordani might have been regarded as business manager for that revolt, as well as producer. He was tremendously busy finding the necessary ammunition and arms to keep his side going, and even busier raising the money with which to purchase said munitions. In brief, he had the meanest job on the Jimenez-Morales side; the hardest working patriot I ever knew of.

He was a Corsican by birth and apparently an adventurer by avocation. His hero was of course his famous fellow countryman, who all but established himself dictator of all Europe. Due to no small measure to the tremendous energy of Giordani, Jimenez and Morales almost routed Wos y Gil. They won a succession of important victories, and such was the situation that it was a good bit of a question just who was boss of the country.

Wos y Gil managed to maintain a finger touch with the existing governmental machinery, but his two enemies appeared to have the upper hand. They had yet to take over the actual Government houses, but so certain were they of accomplishing this minor detail that they sent my friend Giordani to New York with neatly signed documents announcing him as their business agent and the new Consul-General for Santo Domingo.

Giordani arrived in New York and complications greeted him. He discovered that his enthusiasm had victimized him. He was a bit precipitate, so to speak. He neglected to give proper thought to the fact that Wos y Gil had not yet been pried loose from his Presidential chair, and of course it was not within his power to foresee that Wos y Gil wasn't going to be at that time.

Regular Consul General Here

Kept Right on Doing Business

Wos y Gil's own Consul-General in New York, Manuel de J. Galvin, was occupying the office and naturally enough he wasn't resigning until he had to. Particularly was he insistent upon remaining so long as his chief clung to office. But the personal differences of Giordani and Galvin were least in importance in the ensuing tangle.

Here were two Consuls-General for Santo Domingo. Each claimed official sanction. Galvin had something the better of it, inasmuch as he possessed the official stamps and seals, and was already known to exporters as the Consul-General. Nevertheless, exporters, forced by circumstances to be students of Central and South American politics, were quite willing to abandon Galvin for Giordani provided they were more assured that Wos y Gil had been unhorsed by the firm of Jimenez & Morales. News dispatches were vague. The few newspaper correspondents in Santo Domingo at the time had to write guardedly. They had no appetite for military prisons and worse.

For a while it looked as though the actual fighting of this particular revolution might just as well be staged here in New York. There was Giordani with his friends and his coterie of exporters and shippers. Opposed was Galvin with an equal follow-

ing. Presently committees of business men went to Washington and besought the President to take a hand in the matter. The President turned it over to the State Department and the result was that Galvin was recognized as the rightful representative of the only known Government in Santo Domingo.

Giordani, left skulking in his tent, had to do business unofficially. Santo Domingo was all but bankrupt. The existing Government was fundless, and, inasmuch as the revolutionists had not had their opportunity at the public treasury, they lacked money. A few hardy speculators took chances on the loyal forces and gave credit. But no one was quite reckless enough to sell anything to Jimenez and Morales on such terms.

Had a New Currency Printed

To Finance a New Government

We rather suspected that Giordani would take the one way out, and he did. He decided to have new currency for Santo Domingo made. He managed to convince a well known bank note company that the revolution would be a success. He satisfied this corporation that the new Government was due almost any minute and the power of his tongue is demonstrated in the fact that this company turned out for him no less than \$1,500,000 in magnificent bank notes—the new currency of Santo Domingo. Half of this sum was sent to Santo Domingo to pay the rebel troops, thus saving the day, because the lads behind Jimenez and Morales were getting a bit disgusted, and, worse, hungry.

One day after the warriors were paid off the revolution collapsed—that is this particular phase of the revolution. Another sprang up at once, but this number on the long program came to an end and the beautiful bank notes that our friend Giordani negotiated were used to kindle a fire that razed a whole town.

The rest of the bank notes were stored by Giordani in a warehouse over near the North River. Giordani, being left flat with \$750,000 worth of utterly useless and non-negotiable bank notes, took a job of some sort with an exporting and importing concern, and, I believe, made himself a valuable man. It is not unlikely that he would have made much money in a perfectly legitimate way. He was, as I have indicated, intelligent and well educated. His experience was broad.

But his was an adventurous spirit. Money, if made in humdrum manner, meant nothing to Giordani. He loved excitement more. I think he would rather have taken a chance of getting a dollar than have had the dollar thrust into his hand without effort on his part. His kind are like that. The breed seems to have vanished.

Didn't Know Politics of It.

But Knew It Was a Fight

Within a month after the collapse of the revolution I mention above another uprising came to pass. I do not know who touched this one off nor why. It starved to death like its immediate predecessor, but not before Giordani embraced its cause and almost shipped the revolutionists 2,000 rifles and 200,000 rounds of ammunition.

It seems to me that Giordani must have been wholly ignorant concerning the inside politics of this particular revolt, but

that made no difference to Giordani. It was a revolt and that was enough. One took one's revolts where one found them. It was no time to pick and choose. Here was an opportunity to get involved in a nice public fight.

It did not require a great deal of waiting to discover that Giordani had fallen for the lure of another revolution. We discovered that a firm called Merriam & Co. had entered into negotiations with the Hamburg-American Line, with the object of shipping sixteen cases of structural iron to Haiti. That intelligence seemed to fit in with another bit of information to the effect that Giordani had been corresponding with some one just across the Santo Domingo frontier in Haiti.

It was Giordani's desire that these parcels of structural iron should leave New York on the steamship Greacia within a week after we had learned of his latest effort to engage in the Antilles trade.

Quite naturally we looked up Merriam & Co. There was no such concern in New York, and, so far as we were able to learn, there was no such concern anywhere. It required nothing remotely akin to genius to conclude that Merriam & Co. was Jose St. Pierre Giordani. We looked up Giordani.

He was magnificent! Were we not somewhat presumptuous? Did we not do him a great injustice? Were we ready to produce evidence to support our presumptions?

We were not. We were bowed out of the Giordani offices thoroughly defeated, and the gentleman had the grace to inform us that he would be very, very glad to be of any assistance to us inasmuch as it was so obvious that we required much assistance.

Found Barrels and Cases on Pier, But Giordani Was on Guard

Nevertheless we stuck to our theory and learned that the structural iron was to be delivered to the Atlas Line piers, on the North River front, along with thirty-one barrels of cement. Several of us, armed with hammers and augers, met the boxes and barrels at the pier the afternoon they were delivered. We managed to keep out of sight for a while and were rewarded by beholding Giordani arrive and take personal charge of the guarding of the boxes and barrels.

There we waited, watching the boxes and barrels from behind other boxes and barrels, while Giordani, seated upon the stuff, smoked cigarettes and read a newspaper. It was rather ridiculous, to be sure, but it seemed the only thing to do. As far as we knew, those boxes and barrels did contain cement and iron. It was clearly up to us to have facts. But there sat Giordani until 8 o'clock at night. I wondered whether he knew we were watching. If he did he must have enjoyed it.

Presently two heavyweight Latins, who looked like willing and vigorous wrestlers, appeared, and Giordani, after instructing them at length, left them to maintain guard. We were up against a mean proposition. We would make fools of ourselves, besides incurring damage suits, if we were to try to inspect those boxes and barrels by force. Besides those two bruisers looked like capable rough-and-tumble ar-

tists and it would be a foolish waste of energy to engage them for nothing.

But one of the Secret Service operatives became possessed of a idea, more or less brilliant, but wholly effective. He and another man would sneak down to the river end of the pier and put up a fake fight. And suddenly this fight would be interrupted by loud cries for help and shouts of "Man overboard! Man overboard!"

It worked nicely. Giordani's big boys, hearing the disturbance, left their posts. It was 10 o'clock at night and they were rather tired of occupying one spot. Here was a chance for a bit of excitement. They arrived at the water end of the pier to be engaged in a beautiful fight that kept them occupied for more than fifteen minutes. We had it arranged so that there would be no interference, and we, in turn, had given the New York police our word that we would not seriously injure the guards.

We had picked out two tough lads, who were capable of giving Giordani's boys a nice lively quarter-hour and our men saw to it that we had a full twenty minutes to work in. With our augers we discovered that the boxes contained the 2,000 rifles I had mentioned. In the barrels marked "cement" we found cartridges and dynamite.

Giordani Escapes One Net

But Shipment Was Held Up

Our next move was to catch Giordani making a false declaration. It was necessary, I might explain, that we discover him trying to obtain from the customs officials the necessary shipment papers on a false affidavit. More or less confident of success, we waited for him to appear at the Custom House. He was keen. He scented trouble the moment he observed that he was being subjected to more than the perfunctory questioning. And the moment he became suspicious he shut up.

He disavowed this and circumvented that. He saw traps before they were laid. In brief, he was cleverer than we and at once retired to a defensive position, from which we were wholly unable to dislodge him. There was nothing for us to do except forbid the shipment of the consignment.

Did that faze Giordani? Not at all. He merely shrugged his shoulders. He was desolate, to be sure, and further grieved because the great Government of the United States should see fit to interpret his best intentions to be evilly conceived. He caught a gleam of light, however, in the flattery we paid him. Here was Jose St. Pierre Giordani perturbing the mind of America.

Technically Giordani had violated none of our laws. There was no basis for a warrant for his arrest. There remained but one thing to do—to watch him and his possible attempt at making use of the bank notes he caused to be engraved for Jimenez and Morales. These notes had been stored in a West Side warehouse and we placed a guard over them.

We hadn't long to wait. A few weeks later Giordani took one of the boxes containing the stuff and prepared to ship it to Santo Domingo. We arrested him, explaining to him the law that makes it illegal to counterfeit or otherwise imitate the currency of a friendly nation. As I have

already said, he was sent to the penitentiary for six months.

There was no law against the shipping of firearms, except where a special embargo existed. There was none against the shipment of weapons to either Santo Domingo or Haiti at the time. But the law was explicit in forbidding the shipment of explosives unless it was clearly labeled explosives. Technically, as I have indicated, Giordani was immune from arrest for the attempted shipping of the dynamite and TNT, but the manufacturers marked the munitions barrels "Cement" and we caused their arrest. They paid a fine of \$2,000.

It seems that Giordani or some one as vitally interested in getting the shipment to Santo Domingo had cabled the inspectors that the Greacia and her important cargo would arrive at Gonaives, Haiti, on a certain date. They received no subsequent cablegram informing them that the Greacia would arrive but without the arms and ammunition.

Therefore, confident that they were about to receive sufficient war materials to finish whatever they might start, the rebels fell to the business of turning over to the Government with a tremendous will. The Greacia arrived without the rifles and explosive.

And another revolution vanished into nothingness.

Carpenter Bee Skillful at Task

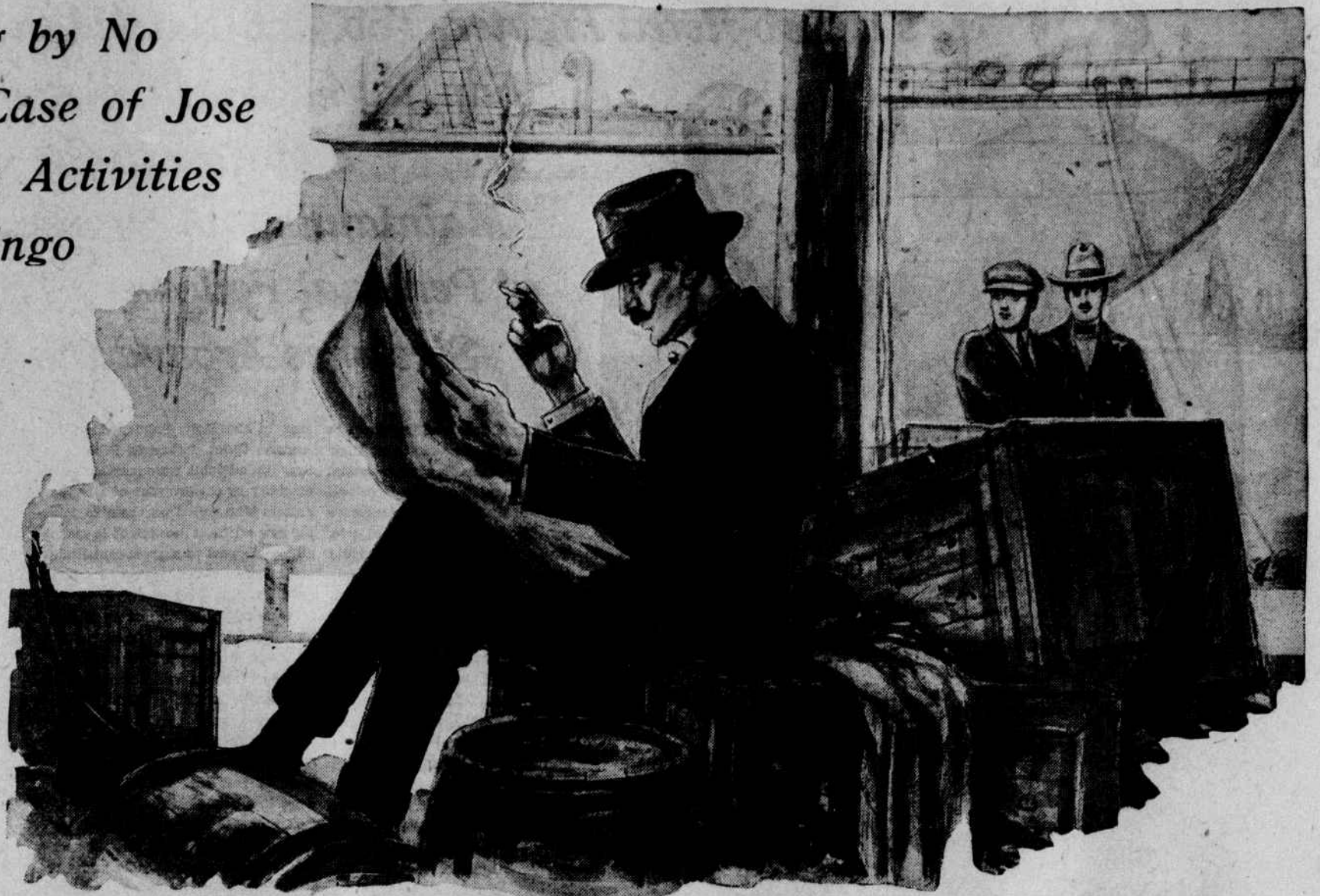
AN interesting creature is the carpenter bee, whose scientific name is *Xylocopa*. This little animal possesses the ferocious look of the bumblebee, but, it seems, does not sting, as does that *bête noir* of the small boy in the country.

The carpenter bee bears a patch on its forehead, whereby it may be distinguished from the bumblebee. This creature has a liking for piling fences and porches. As a general thing, it begins its carpentering work on the underside of a bit of timber, so that the rain cannot enter its house when completed.

This industrious insect does not follow the line of least resistance which might lead it to soft or decayed timbers. It invariably selects a firm joist and begins on this to bore a hole. The implements are, of course, the capable jaws of the bee, and the job is a hard and tedious one. Most of the work is done by the female bee, because the house is built so that she may have a place to lay her eggs and hatch her young.

When the hole has been dug to the proper depth and an egg is laid, she covers it with a wall of mud or clay. Then she lays another egg and partitions this off. In good time her labors are finished. Then the heat of summer hatches out the little bees and they fly their way to the outside.

The carpenter bee is said to be one of the most remarkable examples of patience and industry in the insect world. The only fault is that she does not store honey.



"There we waited, watching the boxes and barrels from behind other boxes and barrels, while Giordani, seated upon the stuff, smoked cigarettes and read a newspaper. It was rather ridiculous to be sure, but it seemed the only thing to do."